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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes a book that provided a detailed synthesis of current thinking, research, and practice in superintendent performance evaluation. It also outlines a new evaluation model designed to overcome the weaknesses of existing models while building on their strengths. The focus is on the evaluation of on-the-job performance of school district superintendents as they implement school board policy. The model consists of the following categories--context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation, and product evaluation. It assesses the following superintendent duties: (1) promote and support student growth and development; (2) honor diversity and promote equal opportunity; (3) foster a positive school climate; (4) provide leadership in school-improvement efforts; (5) stimulate, focus, and support improvement of classroom instruction; (6) lead and manage personnel effectively; (7) manage administrative, fiscal, and facilities functions effectively; (8) assure/provide a safe, orderly environment; (9) foster effective school-community relations; (10) embody and promote professionalism; and (11) relate effectively to the school board. Guidelines are offered for implementing the model within the normal calendar year. Five figures are included. (LMI)

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SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
CURRENT PRACTICE AND DIRECTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Executive Summary

by

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October 1994

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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1. Introduction

The school district superintendent, as the chief executive officer of the board of education, plays a crucial role in the education of America's school children. Concern about standards of educational performance has led practitioners and researchers to seek ways to improve the performance not only of students, but also of educational personnel, including teachers, principals, and superintendents. While the evaluation of teachers has a substantial body of associated research literature to guide and inform practice, there is a lack of literature about administrator evaluation. The purpose of the book summarized herein is to provide a detailed synthesis of current thinking, research, and practice in superintendent performance evaluation as a basis for promoting improved practice and further research in this important area of educational evaluation. In addition, we outline a new evaluation model designed to overcome the weaknesses of existing models while building on their strengths. This executive summary is intended for the use of district boards and superintendents as they examine and strengthen their district's superintendent performance evaluation system.

Evaluation may be carried out at several points in the career of a school district superintendent to establish whether or not an applicant has the *aptitude* to succeed in a superintendent preparation program; once graduated from such a program, to determine if the candidate has developed sufficient competence to be certified or licensed for service as a superintendent; thereafter, to establish whether or not a *certified* superintendent has the *special qualifications* to succeed in a particular position; once employed, to gauge how well the superintendent is fulfilling job *performance* requirements; and to identify *highly meritorious service* that deserves special recognition.

Local citizens make up the school board, which typically has 5-7 members but can vary from 4-10 or more members. Board members are usually elected, although in some areas they are appointed, usually by the mayor or city council. This body may also be known by other names, such as the school committee, the school trustees, and the board of school inspectors. The precise role of the board is debatable, but generally it is responsible for establishing policy, based on state law; monitoring progress; and evaluating the results of a wide range of administrative duties.

This book focuses on the evaluation of the on-the-job *performance* of school district superintendents as they implement school board policy. The decision to focus on performance evaluation is due to the relative importance of this kind of evaluation in the move to raise educational standards and improve educational accountability.

2. Methodology

The process of identifying and analyzing systems of superintendent evaluation involved the following stages: a broad search for evaluation models; the filing and organization of all materials pertaining to these models; conceptual analysis of the evaluation systems represented in these materials to arrive at a useful characterization of them; synthesis to show the major superintendent evaluation models

available to school districts; and finally, a systematic evaluation of these major models, identifying strengths and weaknesses in terms of the 21 *Personnel Evaluation Standards*, published by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1988).

As with all other CREATE projects, the products of this research are subject to the CREATE Product Review and Approval Process, which involves both internal and external reviewers. The external reviewers are educational experts and potential users whose role is to ensure the integrity and validity of the product. The internal review board comprises various CREATE directors who are responsible for the final approval of products for dissemination. The board is assisted by the Internal Evaluator who coordinates the process and ensures that the project's directors and staff take into account the recommendations of both the external and internal reviewers. The product review and approval process draws on *The Personnel Evaluation Standards* developed by the Joint Committee. All 21 standards of Propriety, Utility, Feasibility, and Accuracy are reflected in the instrument for soliciting comments from reviewers.

3. Conceptual Framework

Boards are now more than ever before in a position to examine and improve superintendent performance evaluation, for the following reasons:

1. There is widespread dissatisfaction, especially on the part of the public and their representatives on school boards but among school professionals as well, concerning evaluations of school professionals, schools, and programs. Thus, the time is right for boards to improve their evaluation procedures, obtaining assistance from researchers as needed, and thus increase their own and the public's confidence in their evaluation systems.

2. There is growing agreement that educational evaluations must be grounded in assessments of student progress, and researchers have been working to develop defensible methods for doing so.

3. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) has reached agreement on a published set of competencies for the superintendency (1993). The *AASA Professional Standards for the Superintendency* define the knowledge and skill that should form the basis of superintendent **preparation, certification,** and **professional development.** These competencies may be useful in providing for and assessing the ongoing professional development of the superintendent as a part of the performance evaluation process.

4. Research discussed by Carter, Glass, and Hord (1993) indicates the importance of personality and political factors in board decisions to hire and fire superintendents.

The failure to give primacy to professional factors in such decisions may be harmful to the school district and its students. Boards need to establish criteria for evaluating superintendents that are based on the **professional** competencies and duties of the position.

5. Scriven has made a strong case in the literature (1993) for grounding evaluations in the generic duties of particular professional groups, where duties are defined as "obligatory tasks, conduct, service, or functions enjoined by order, ethical code, or usage according to rank, occupation, or profession."

6. Webster (1993) pointed out that there must be significant and ongoing communication and involvement by consumers as well as school professionals in defining evaluative criteria, for example, by establishing a standing accountability commission. Certain Joint Committee standards address this issue.

This book draws on the latest research and current practice to develop a draft model for guiding the evaluation of educational administrators. The model is designed to meet the Joint Committee standards, to integrate the strong features of other evaluation approaches, and to address the special needs of administrator evaluation.

The Personnel Evaluation Standards

The Personnel Evaluation Standards were developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, which included representatives from 14 major professional organizations concerned with education. The committee studied evaluation practices and obtained input from educators to develop the standards, which were reviewed by experts and field tested before being published in 1988.

The Standards are intended to assist educators in developing, assessing, adapting, and improving systems for evaluating educational personnel. They are grouped into four main categories:

Propriety Standards require that evaluations be conducted legally, ethically, and with due consideration for the welfare of the evaluatees and of the clients of the evaluation. The five Propriety standards are Service Orientation, Formal Evaluation Guidelines, Conflict of Interest, Access to Personnel Evaluation Reports, and Interactions with Evaluatees.

Utility Standards are intended to guide evaluations so that they are informative, timely, and influential. There are five Utility standards: Constructive Orientation, Defined Uses, Evaluator Credibility, Functional Reporting, and Follow-up and Impact.

Feasibility Standards call for evaluation systems that are as easy to implement as possible, efficient in their use of time and resources, adequately funded, and viable from a number of other standpoints. The three Feasibility standards are Practical Procedures, Political Viability, and Fiscal Viability.

Accuracy Standards require that the obtained information be technically accurate and that conclusions be linked logically to the data. The eight Accuracy standards are Defined Role, Work Environment, Documentation of Procedures, Valid Measurement, Reliable Measurement, Systematic Data Control, Bias Control, and Monitoring Evaluation Systems.

The Evaluation Process

The evaluation process involves four main task areas. These are delineating the information to be obtained and processed; obtaining the information; providing the information to the appropriate audiences; and applying the information to personnel decisions and improvement efforts. The broad task areas, in turn, can be operationalized in terms of specific tasks, which provide the basic procedures for conducting the evaluation.

Categories of Evaluation Information

The information required in the evaluation process may be categorized as context, input, process, and product information. These are the categories of the CIPP Model introduced by Stufflebeam in 1966 (Stufflebeam, 1966; 1967; 1983; Stufflebeam et al., 1971). Evaluations of district contexts, inputs, processes, and products should be an essential part of and feed into the evaluation of educational personnel.

Context evaluation concerns the context or setting within which the evaluatee works. It assesses needs, opportunities, problems, and goals. Needs are the elements necessary or useful for fulfilling some defensible purpose, such as the education of students. There are two kinds of needs: consequential needs concern the levels of attainment on indicators related to the purpose of the organization, such as student achievement scores; and instrumental needs relate to the elements of the delivery system required to fulfill the consequential needs, such as a sound curriculum and competent superintendents. Opportunities are unused ideas and resources that are potentially available to the organization. Problems are the barriers to meeting student or system needs or to using potentially available ideas and untapped resources, such as inadequate funds to hire well-qualified teachers. Goals are the intended outcomes that the organization works to achieve, such as an increase in student graduate rates or a broadening of curriculum offerings. Context evaluations of needs, opportunities, problems, and goals help the board and superintendent to set priorities and targets for the superintendent's leadership during a given time period.

Input evaluation assesses the relative strengths, weaknesses, and costs of alternative courses of action for meeting identified needs and fulfilling professional duties. The aim of input evaluation is to find more effective strategies for carrying out district functions and to ensure that the district's resources are being used to best advantage. Input evaluations assess district plans as well as individual professional work plans. They assess both written plans and the planning process.

Process evaluation documents and assesses the implementation of district plans and operations. Process evaluation is conducted both to help guide an effort (formative evaluation) and to document and assess the quality of implementation (summative evaluation). Formative process evaluation is intended to check on the implementation of plans and to influence needed corrections either in the plans or in their execution. Summative process evaluation sums up and assesses the appropriateness and quality of activities carried out in the attempt to implement plans and to fulfill assigned duties.

Product evaluation focuses on accomplishments, in particular the fulfillment of student needs in such areas as academic achievement, health, racial integration, and graduation. In addition, product evaluation looks for improvements in the delivery system, for example, in teaching, curriculum, facilities, and district policy. Product evaluation is broad in scope and seeks both unanticipated and anticipated and negative as well as positive effects.

This section has presented the essential elements of a sound evaluation system, namely, the rationale for a consensus approach, standards of sound evaluation, the tasks in the evaluation process, and the generic categories of information involved in evaluations.

4. The Superintendency

This section provides a framework for superintendents and boards to develop and articulate a common view of the superintendency within the contemporary American school system, taking into account its distinctive requirements in different settings.

Entry Requirements: Evaluation by Credential

Entry into the field of educational administration has been through a credentialing process based on state requirements that vary across the country. Typically, certification requires teaching experience and at least a masters degree; however, states are increasingly asking candidates to fulfill additional requirements. Because progress in evaluation efforts has been slow, the main mechanism for evaluating superintendents has been through the credentialing process.

In 1993, the AASA published *Professional Standards for the Superintendency*, which specify the skills and knowledge that those consulted agree should be the basis of superintendent **preparation,**

certification, and **professional development** programs. It is likely that these standards will be adopted by an increasing number of organizations involved in the training and certification of school district superintendents.

Other work aimed at delineating the requirements of the superintendency is reported by Carter, Glass, and Hord (1993). These authors refer to work at the University of Texas, which seeks to identify the performance domains, tasks, and competencies of the superintendency.

Carter, Glass, and Hord also find that the competency needs of the superintendent vary according to the size, locality, and type of school district.

Duties of the Superintendent

A typical description of the duties of the superintendent might be as follows. The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the school system appointed by and directly responsible to the board of education for the discharge of her/his responsibilities. The superintendent acts in accordance with the policies, rules, and regulations established by the board and the laws and regulations of the state and federal government. The administration of the entire school system is delegated to the superintendent.

The job description of the superintendent can be a complex and demanding set of duties that runs into several pages and typically includes such items as leading the system; translating board policy into action plans and administrative regulations; recruiting and assigning personnel according to board policy; preparing an annual budget; supervising all school personnel; setting and supervising all instructions; and developing appropriate curricula for students.

Considering the changes that have transpired during the past three or four decades in American society and in American schools, a modified role for the modern superintendent might be that of consensus builder, planner, communicator, and visionary for the school system as well as that of competent manager. Contemporary authors and researchers emphasize that as well as being good managers, superintendents must possess the visionary and messianic skills to provide transformational leadership to school organizations.

The board, on the other hand, is recognized as the policy-developing body and the governance force for the school district. The board alone has responsibility for setting policy; for interpreting the needs of students, staff, and patrons of the district; and for establishing the governance mechanisms to be implemented within the school system.

Most states have definitions of the generic duties of the superintendent, which many boards of education adapt to take into account the specifics of the superintendent's job in the school district. More recently, seven functions of the office of superintendent have been identified. The

superintendent is charged with ensuring that these functions are provided for within the school organization: planning, delivery, education, business management, communications, instructional support, and noninstructional support.

Superintendent Contract and Tenure

Most superintendents are not in tenure-accruing positions. They serve at the pleasure of the school board and are usually employed under terms of a negotiated contract. Some states set limits for the length of the superintendent's contract ranging from a single year to a term of five years. Many states provide the opportunity for a "roll over" or renewal of the contract whereby the superintendent's contract is extended at the time of the annual evaluation.

Many states require, and most individual superintendent contracts provide, that the annual summative performance evaluation be completed by the end of February in order to accommodate existing state professional employment laws. These laws usually state that if notice is not given by the end of February regarding continued employment on a contract that expires at the end of the current year, the superintendent's contract is automatically extended for another year. This permits three options: termination for cause, an assigned professional improvement plan with corrective actions to be met by a certain time, and a contract extension or continuation of employment as superintendent.

5. Literature Review Findings

In this section, the current status of performance evaluation as reflected in the research literature is described in relation to a number of key research questions. The most important issues and problems that need to be addressed in order to improve superintendent evaluations are identified.

The findings are drawn largely from five surveys of superintendents; two are nationwide surveys, and three were conducted at the state level. There is considerable agreement in the findings of these surveys; however, there are discrepancies that may be attributable to differences in the composition of the samples surveyed and to differences in focus among the studies.

What is the extent and frequency of superintendent evaluation?

The vast majority of superintendents (nearly 80 percent) are evaluated annually, a small number (around 7 percent) are evaluated semiannually, and in a few districts (several hundred) the superintendent is never evaluated.

What are the purposes of superintendent evaluation?

A broad range of purposes are identified in the literature:

To improve educational performance
To improve superintendent/board communication
To clarify the roles of the superintendent and the board
To improve board/superintendent relations
To inform the superintendent of the board's expectations
To improve planning
To aid in the professional development of the superintendent
As a basis for personnel decisions
As an accountability mechanism
To fulfill legal requirements

One study found that boards and superintendents may differ substantially in their perceptions of the use of evaluation to improve the instructional leadership role of the superintendent. This is an important aspect of the board/superintendent relationship that deserves further study. Furthermore, this finding serves to emphasize the need to clarify and specify, preferably in writing, the purpose of superintendent evaluation.

What criteria are used to evaluate superintendents?

The three main types of evaluation criteria are traits, processes, and outcomes. Traits are the characteristics possessed by an individual that tell us something about what the person is capable of or likely to do. Traits include personality variables, attitudes, particular knowledge, job-related skills, professional training, and prior experiences. This type of criterion has proved to be ineffectual in discriminating between effective and ineffective administrators.

Processes are activities, such as planning, organizing, coordinating, staffing, and budgeting. Such processes have not endured as standard definitions of what administrators do, because researchers have not been able to define exactly what these processes consist of nor how best to measure them.

Outcomes are the result of administrative processes or behaviors. Examples of outcome evaluation criteria are student test scores; specific budgetary targets; and curriculum goals, such as the establishment of a new curriculum for mathematics at grade levels K-3.

In the light of public demand for student outcome measures to be included in the evaluation of educational professionals, researchers are working to develop techniques for validly including such data. This criterion is important to some degree in more than half of superintendent evaluations. However, superintendents affect such measures indirectly through a complex and diffuse network of

relationships, and the superintendent is only one of many diverse contributors to student achievement.

There is a high degree of agreement on the most important criteria by which superintendents are evaluated: board/superintendent relationships, general effectiveness, and budget development and implementation.

Studies of the reasons why boards hire and fire superintendents shed light on the evaluation criteria boards use in practice. Such studies indicate the importance of personal and political rather than professional factors. Factors influencing board decisions include the right "chemistry" between the superintendent and the board, the support of the old boys network, and problems arising out of errors of political judgment: "It's not usually that you really made some big, bad mistake; you just made some dumb political mistake." To best meet student educational needs, boards should focus on the **professional** skills and performance of the superintendent.

What methods are used to evaluate superintendents?

The most commonly used methods of evaluation are printed forms--in particular, rating scales and checklists--and discussion among board members without the superintendent present. Written comments or essays and observations are also used frequently, although there is less agreement in the literature on how widespread these particular methods are.

For nearly half of superintendents, their evaluation is discussed with them at a meeting of the board and superintendent.

Concern is expressed about the lack of objectivity in some methods used to evaluate superintendents. There is a need for technically sound, widely available evaluation instruments that may be adapted to the particular circumstances of the district.

Who conducts superintendent evaluations and how well qualified are they to do so?

The overwhelming majority of superintendents (more than 90 percent) are evaluated by the members of the board, often with input from the superintendent.

Evidence suggests that school board members may not be adequately prepared for evaluating superintendents. Although state board association policy documents generally offer guidelines for setting up and implementing evaluation systems, rarely do such publications refer to the prerequisite skills or training needed by the evaluators. Training is an issue that is crucial to the development of improved evaluation systems and therefore deserves further research.

What other stakeholder groups provide input into the evaluation process?

Input from other stakeholders groups, such as peers, subordinates, constituents, teachers, and students, is solicited in no more than 10 percent of school districts. This may reflect a lack of interest in surveying stakeholder groups or, more likely, may be related to issues of feasibility and know-how. There is a need for practical guidelines on methods for obtaining and using input from such groups in the evaluation process.

6. Description and Assessment of Superintendent Evaluation Models

Twelve distinct models have been identified. They are categorized according to how evaluation judgments are made: namely, whether evaluation conclusions are based most strongly on global judgment, judgment driven by specified criteria, or judgment driven by data.

Figure 1 presents a chart that summarizes and evaluates the 12 models. It draws from an exhaustive, in-depth analysis presented in a separate technical supplement. The summary description of each model is structured under a series of headings:

Distinctive Features: the various aspects of the model that best characterize and distinguish it as it is currently used in U.S. school districts.

Common Variations: aspects of the model that often vary from one district to another.

Purposes/Uses: the main ways in which the model is typically utilized--formative, summative, or both.

Cut Scores/Standards: the formally specified level of expected achievement for performance of the job function.

Data Collection: the techniques, instruments, and systems used to gather information about the superintendent's performance.

Reporting: the method of, and audiences for, formally communicating evaluation results.

General Timetable: how often the evaluation is conducted.

Evaluator/Participants: the individuals and stakeholders who have input in the evaluation process.

Figure 1

SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Summary Descriptions of Alternative Models

ORIENTATION	Global Judgment				Judgment Driven by Specified Criteria					Judgment Driven by Data		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MODEL	Board Judgment	Descriptive Narrative Reports	Formative Exchanges About Performance	Stakeholder Evaluation	Printed Rating Forms	Report Cards	Management by Objectives	Performance Contracting	Duties-Based Evaluation	Superintendent Portfolio	Student Outcome Measures	School and District Accreditation
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES	Individual and collective board judgment	Board's end-of-year written report	Regular exchanges between board and superintendent	Assessment based on systematic querying of stakeholders	Assessments are gathered with a printed form	Board grades the superintendent's performance	Assessment against prespecified objectives	Contract specifying expected outcomes and consequences of success or failure	Comprehensive assessment against defined duties	Demonstration of performance using accountability records	Judgment of superintendent performance against student achievement	Judgment of superintendent performance based on district accreditation results
VARIATIONS	Verbal or written judgments	Structured or open-ended report; superintendent may also write a report	In scheduling of evaluation exchanges	Criteria may or may not be specified; methods of data collection and sampling may vary	In types of form, e.g., rating scale, checklist, or questionnaire. In groups completing the form.	Other groups, e.g., media, assign grades	Objectives may be specific or broad	Sometimes includes a financial incentive	May use specific administrator duties or broader job responsibilities	Board may collect some of the data; may include aggregation guidelines	Tests vary; they may be state mandated, norm-referenced, or criterion-referenced	In evidence considered and how it is collected; accrediting body may be a regional or state organization
PURPOSES	Formative and summative	Formative and summative	Mainly formative	Mainly summative	Formative and summative	Summative	Formative and summative	Mainly summative	Formative and summative	Formative and summative	Summative	Summative
CUT SCORES/ STANDARDS	Unspecified	Unspecified	Unspecified	May be specified	Descriptive (e.g., "unsatisfactory") or numerical ratings	Unspecified	May be specified	Specified in the contract	May be specified	Usually unspecified	Norms may be used	Externally defined
DATA COLLECTION	Board members as participant observers	Board members as participant observers	Board members as participant observers	Varied, may include letters, questionnaires, rating forms, focus groups	Completion of the form by participant observers	Not always focused Observation/review of records and test scores	Board members as interviewers and observers	Observation/ review of records and test scores	Observation, accountability reports, or data review	Portfolio compiled by superintendent and possibly board	Student tests and other outcome information	Self-study and site visits
REPORTING	Executive session; oral and written	Written report in executive session	Periodic discussions, usually in executive session	Oral or written; first in executive session followed by public report	Written report; public or private	May be in executive session or given to the media	Oral and/or written; usually in executive session	Oral and/or written; usually in executive session	Oral and/or written; often in executive session	Discussion in executive session	Interpretation of test scores; usually in executive session	Executive discussion of a public report
GENERAL TIMETABLE	Usually once a year; may be more often	Usually once a year	Periodic or as needs arise	Not more than once a year	Usually once a year	Usually once a year	Quarterly	Usually once a year	Usually once a year; can be more often	Usually midyear and end of year	Usually once a year	Whenever accreditation report is due, e.g., every 5 years
EVALUATOR/ PARTICIPANTS	Board members	Board members and sometimes the superintendent	Board members and superintendent	Board members and stakeholders, sometimes external evaluators	Board members and possibly other stakeholders	Board members; sometimes media or others	Board members and sometimes an outside evaluator	Board members and possibly other stakeholders	Board members and sometimes outside evaluators	Board members and superintendent with input from other stakeholders	Board members	District and accrediting personnel

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SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
Main Strengths and Weaknesses of Alternative Models

ORIENTATION	Global Judgment				Judgment Driven by Specified Criteria					Judgment Driven by Data		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MODEL	Board Judgment	Descriptive Narrative Reports	Formative Exchanges About Performance	Stakeholder Evaluation	Printed Rating Forms	Report Cards	Management by Objectives	Performance Contracting	Duties-Based Evaluation	Superintendent Portfolio	Student Outcome Measures	School and District Accreditation
MAIN STRENGTHS	Easy and inexpensive to use Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Grounded in direct board/superintendent exchange Provides scope to consider a wide range of criteria tied to district priorities Involves multiple judgments as a basis for making the summative evaluation	Inexpensive and easy to implement Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Encourages board reflection and a carefully considered evaluation Provides scope to consider wide-ranging criteria tied to district priorities Board and superintendent interact formally at least annually and directly Evaluation is flexible and responsive to district priorities and needs	Easy and inexpensive to implement Ensures frequent evaluation using board-approved procedures Much scope to consider a range of locally relevant criteria and to respond to changing district circumstances Provides continuous, formative feedback Board and superintendent interact formally, frequently, and directly about adequacy of the superintendent's performance	Regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Involvement of stakeholders in the evaluation process Provisions for collecting data from a variety of sources Encourages participation of the broader community in evaluation of the superintendent	Ensures regular evaluation by the district's top policy body Easy and inexpensive to implement Criteria are specified and applied consistently by all evaluators Provides for cross-checks of ratings and addressing conflicts of interest Well-developed forms ensure a comprehensive evaluation	Permits great flexibility in determining the criteria to be used Provides a familiar format for communicating evaluation results to the community Easy and inexpensive to implement Involvement of others may ensure fair treatment of the superintendent Provision for the superintendent and board to agree on criteria before the evaluation	Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Performance criteria/objectives are specified and periodically reviewed Recognition of and planning for current district priorities A more objective approach Easy to implement	Ensures regular evaluation using board- and superintendent-approved procedures Criteria are specified, and there is scope to incorporate district priorities There is a legal avenue for appeal Is cost-efficient and flexible enough to meet local conditions	Ensures regular evaluation using board-approved procedures Easy and not too costly to implement Includes ethical considerations A well-defined duties list will ensure a comprehensive evaluation Criteria for the evaluation are specified based on agreed-upon duties Facilitates clarification of superintendent and board roles Provision for collecting data from a variety of sources	Assures regular evaluation using board- and superintendent-approved procedures Helps delineate board/superintendent roles Data sources are clear, multiple, and auditable Use of data reduces bias and conflicts of interest Flexibility to include (and review regularly) wide-ranging criteria tied to district needs Includes provision for stakeholder input	Assures regular evaluation using board-approved methods Use of learning measures reduces risk of bias and conflict of interest Reasonably inexpensive to implement Focuses the work of the superintendent on student achievement	Regular evaluation by an external organization, which may lend credibility Ensures that students receive a minimally acceptable level of education Requires minimal staff, superintendent, and board time May yield other information that is important to the district Data sources are clear May help district to set goals and priorities
MAIN WEAKNESSES	Lack of prespecified evaluation criteria, procedures, and data Prone to bias and conflict of interest No procedures for resolving disputes among board members No provision for appeals or review and improvement of evaluation procedures Lack of involvement of other stakeholders	Lack of prespecified criteria, procedures, and data Prone to bias and conflict of interest No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures No explicit involvement of stakeholders	Lack of specified criteria, procedures, and data Prone to bias and conflict of interest No mechanisms for appeals and review of evaluation procedures No explicit involvement of stakeholders	Time consuming and difficult to implement No procedures for appeals and for monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of the evaluation Criteria may be unclear and inconsistently applied May not be confined to agreed-upon performance criteria No explicit procedure for including student learning as a basis for evaluating the superintendent	Little involvement of stakeholders Criteria may be out-of-date, superficial, or inadequately keyed to job requirements Lack of auditable data No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures and forms Unlikely to provide continuous feedback for improving superintendent performance Printed form may emphasize general responsibilities to the exclusion of specific responsibilities (or vice versa)	Criteria may be inadequately linked to job requirements No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures Lack of auditable data No systematic involvement of stakeholders Prone to bias and conflict of interest No provision for multiple sources of information	Performance objectives may be poorly defined or neglect important issues or duties No involvement of stakeholders No procedures for appeals or data audits The model may or may not consider work environment	Performance objectives may neglect important job responsibilities Unintended outcomes, e.g., unethical behavior, and a narrowing of the curriculum Unresponsive to changing district circumstances and unexpected situations No involvement of stakeholders No provision for review of evaluation procedures May not consider the work environment	No provision for appeals and review of evaluation procedures Duties may be superficial and not keyed to district needs May or may not consider the work environment Inadequate guidelines for involving stakeholders and collecting auditable data	Can be time-consuming and administratively difficult to implement Lacks provision for appeals and periodic review of evaluation procedures May not be confined to identified and agreed-upon professional responsibilities	No provision for appeals or review of evaluation procedures and achievement tests No involvement of stakeholders Student outcomes are but one aspect of job responsibilities Student data may not provide a full range of performance duties Controlling for student background factors is difficult to achieve Unfair to judge the superintendent on factors not directly under her/his control	Superintendent evaluation may not be a major part of the accreditation Lack of local control may lead to subordination of district priorities Accreditation criteria may be inadequately linked to job requirements No provision for appeals and data audit Little involvement of stakeholders Minimal involvement of board and superintendent May not be cost-effective

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The summary evaluation of each model lists its main strengths and weaknesses, which were determined by comparing the model to the requirements of the 21 Joint Committee (1988) *Personnel Evaluation Standards.* The exhaustive, in-depth analysis of each model is presented in a separate technical supplement entitled *Technical Supplement to Superintendent Performance Evaluation: Current Practice and Directions for Improvement.*

The chart is on two sides. The front side presents the brief descriptions of the models, and the reverse side lists the models' main strengths and weaknesses.

The general message communicated by the chart is that each of the 12 evaluation models has strengths as well as weaknesses. However, none is sufficiently strong in relation to the Joint Committee standards to warrant recommending its continued use, at least without substantial revision. This analysis of the 12 models provides some useful points for consideration in the development and assessment of a new model, presented in Section 7.

7. Toward a New Evaluation Model

The preceding sections provide a foundation of information for developing a new superintendent performance evaluation model and offer a glimpse of the extreme complexity of the superintendent's job. The goal of this section is necessarily modest: to outline the rudiments of a new and better model that is designed to

a. meet the requirements of *The Personnel Evaluation Standards*

b. build on the strengths of extant superintendent performance evaluation models and avoid their weaknesses

c. embody and focus on the generic duties of the school district superintendent

d. integrate established concepts of educational evaluation theory, including the basic purpose of evaluations (to assess merit and/or worth), the generic process of evaluation (delineating, obtaining, providing, and applying information), the main classes of information to be collected (context, inputs, processes, and products), and the main roles of evaluation (formative input for improvement and summative assessment for accountability)

Tasks in the Evaluation Process

The proposed model aims to assess the merit and worth of superintendent performance and includes four main task areas: **delineating**, **obtaining**, **providing**, and **applying** pertinent information.

The **delineating** tasks provide the crucial foundation for the evaluation process. Here, the board, in communication with the superintendent, clarifies the superintendent's duties and the basic ground rules for the evaluation. Decisions are made concerning whether the evaluation will address only merit or also worth, what audiences will have access to what evaluation results for what purposes, what superintendent accountabilities will undergird the collection of assessment information, how the different accountabilities will be weighted for importance, and what standards will be used to reach conclusions about the merit and/or worth of the superintendent's performance.

The board and superintendent need to pay particular heed to the superintendent's contract and job description, the results of previous evaluations of the superintendent, current assignments given to the superintendent by the board, and pertinent data on school system performance and needs, among other sources. The board and superintendent should engage in productive communication and make a written record of their agreements in order to prepare for the ensuing stages of the evaluation process.

The **obtaining** tasks include collecting, organizing, validating, and analyzing the needed information. In general, information is gathered about the district context (e.g., needs assessment data, including last year's student achievement, attendance, and graduation data), district and superintendent inputs (e.g., the district's strategic plan and budget and the superintendent's work plan), district and superintendent process (e.g., activity reports, financial data, and stakeholder judgments), and district and superintendent products (e.g., this year's student achievement and related data, special project outcomes, the superintendent's evaluations of district staff, and unexpected outcomes of superintendent activities).

The **providing** tasks involve reporting findings to the intended users in ways to best serve intended uses. The board may provide the superintendent with a modicum of formative feedback during the school year. However, the board should keep such feedback to a minimum to help assure that the board will not infringe on the superintendent's delegated responsibilities and authority. The providing tasks also include one or more summative evaluation reports to serve accountability and decision-making purposes, provide direction for the superintendent's professional improvement, and provide feedback to the press and community.

The **applying** tasks concern uses of evaluation reports. They aim to insure that evaluation findings are used in meaningful ways and not just collected and reported. In general, boards and superintendents should plan to use reports to guide the superintendent's professional development, reach employment decisions (e.g., on salary, modification of assigned duties, continuation/-termination), and as input for planning district improvement efforts (e.g., reorganization of the central office, employment of specialized personnel, and curriculum revision).

These tasks are not linear, but are looping, interactive, and overlapping.

Grounding Evaluation in Communication

The proposed model relies heavily on sound communication. It is in the best interests of the board, superintendent, and members of the school community to develop an evaluation system in consideration of input from stakeholders, to maintain common understanding of the superintendent evaluation system among stakeholders, and to earn widespread respect for the evaluation system's integrity and value to the district. In order to make the evaluation system function effectively it is also important to ground its process in effective ongoing communication between the board and the superintendent.

Communication to Help Develop or Improve the Evaluation System. When the board and superintendent decide either to develop a new superintendent evaluation system or to review and revise the present system, they should provide concrete opportunities for stakeholders to keep informed about the work and to provide input. For example, they might conduct announced meetings to hear and discuss input from interested parties.

Also, the district might engage a standing representative accountability commission, as recently seen in Dallas, Texas, and Lincoln, Nebraska, to provide systematic review and advisory assistance to the evaluation effort. Advisory commission membership might include parents, teachers, students, administrators, board members, and community representatives. Such persons can help insure that views from a representative group of stakeholders are considered in designing and/or improving the evaluation system. The members of the accountability commission can also be asked to help explain the evaluation system to other stakeholders.

After the evaluation system is developed or refined, the board should periodically inform the school district staff and the community in a printed description of the system about the criteria and procedures used to evaluate superintendent performance. In these releases the board should encourage, provide opportunities for, and give assurance that it will use input from stakeholders on how to improve the system. The board should keep the local press correctly informed about the nature of the superintendent performance evaluation system, so that newspaper and other media accounts of superintendent evaluation are based on accurate information.

Communication Required to Implement the Evaluation System. There is also a need for healthy communication within each evaluation cycle. Communication between superintendent and board is the essence of the delineating stage in which they determine the evaluation questions, criteria, weights, variables, etc. that will guide the collection, reporting, and use of information. Communication is also part and parcel of the providing stage, in which the board presents both formative and summative feedback to the superintendent and sometimes summative reports to the diverse group of school district staff and constituents. Communication is also involved in the applying stage, especially when the board works out a relevant professional development plan for the

superintendent and/or works with her/him to use the evaluation results to modify school district plans for the coming year.

Keying Evaluation to the Duties of the Superintendency

Superintendent performance evaluations should be grounded in clearly defined duties. These are the responsibilities--recognized in the U.S. society, in the local community, by the state education department, and by the pertinent educational professions--that superintendents have to fulfill in serving their communities and school districts.

The duties listed below can be used by boards to guide evaluations of superintendent performance. These duties were determined through a careful integration of administrator duties identified in Texas school districts and the recently released AASA standards for superintendent competencies. Boards and superintendents should use this list selectively to determine superintendent accountabilities, and thus the evaluation focus, for any given year.

Proposed General and Illustrative Specific Duties of Superintendents

1. Promote and support **student growth and development.**

   1.1 Assess and report on student achievement, attendance, and graduation rate.

   1.2 Provide leadership for annually assessing and setting priorities on student and district needs.

   1.3 Evaluate and provide direction for improving school/district offerings.

   1.4 Motivate and assist students to develop a sense of self-worth.

   1.5 Provide leadership for improving parent involvement in the schools.

   1.6 Set priorities in the context of student needs.

2. Honor diversity and promote **equality of opportunity.**

   2.1 Recruit qualified minority and majority staff.

   2.2 Examine, communicate, and address gaps in achievement of different groups of students.

   2.3 Provide leadership necessary to fully integrate schools and programs.

2.4 Serve as an articulate spokesperson for the welfare of all students in a multicultural context.

2.5 Respect diversity of religion, ethnicity, and cultural values in students, staff, and programs.

2.6 Insure equitable distribution of district resources.

3. Foster a positive **school climate.**

3.1 Assess and provide leadership for improving environments in and around each district school.

3.2 Conduct school climate assessments.

3.3 Articulate and disseminate high expectations for student learning and teaching quality.

3.4 Promote a positive climate for learning, and an atmosphere of acceptance for all students willing to participate in an orderly process of learning; do not tolerate chronic disruptive and/or criminal behavior from students.

3.5 Promote, demonstrate, and support clear two-way communication at all levels of the district.

3.6 Promote academic rigor and excellence for staff and students.

3.7 Encourage and foster self-esteem in staff and students.

3.8 Manifest multicultural and ethnic understanding.

3.9 Assess individual and institutional sources of stress and apply methods for reducing stress.

4. Provide leadership in **school improvement** efforts.

4.1 Develop, communicate, and implement a collective vision of school improvement.

4.2 Encourage, model, and support creativity and appropriate risk taking.

4.3 Provide direction and support for periodic review of curriculum and school policies and procedures.

4.4 Formulate strategic plans, goals, and change efforts with staff and community.

4.5 Formulate procedures for gathering, analyzing, and using district data for decision making.

5. Stimulate, focus, and support **improvement of classroom instruction.**

5.1 Provide encouragement, opportunities, and structure for teachers to design better learning experiences for students.

5.2 Evaluate and provide direction for improving classroom instruction.

5.3 Develop and offer opportunities that respond to teachers' needs for professional development.

5.4 Encourage and facilitate the use of new technology to improve teaching and learning.

6. Lead and manage **personnel** effectively.

6.1 Effectively define and delegate administrative authority and responsibility to certified and uncertified personnel.

6.2 Evaluate performance of subordinates using the best feasible evaluation practice and take appropriate follow-up action.

6.3 Recognize and reward exemplary performance of district personnel.

6.4 Encourage and support personal and professional growth among all district personnel.

6.5 Comply with, and if possible improve, applicable personnel policies and rules.

6.6 Recruit and select competent district personnel.

7. Manage **administrative, fiscal, and facilities functions** effectively.

7.1 Obtain competent fiscal/financial analysis.

7.2 Keep informed of funding sources.

7.3 Prepare appropriate budgets and cost estimates.

7.4 Manage the district budget.

7.5 Create and implement an internal/external audit system.

7.6 Maintain accurate fiscal records.

7.7 Ensure that facilities are maintained and upgraded as necessary.

7.8 Manage attendance, accounting, payroll, transportation.

7.9 Manage personal and district time effectively.

7.10 Conduct sound evaluation to guide decisions, e.g., in selecting office equipment and planning building construction or fund-raising campaigns.

7.11 Identify and evaluate alternative employee benefits packages.

7.12 Effectively apply the legal requirements for personnel selection, development, retention, and dismissal.

8. Assure/provide a **safe, orderly environment**.

8.1 Develop and communicate guidelines for student conduct.

8.2 Ensure that rules are uniformly observed and enforced.

8.3 Discipline students for misconduct in an effective and fair manner.

8.4 Promote a collaborative approach to discipline, involving staff, students, and parents.

9. Foster effective **school-community relations**.

9.1 Formulate and implement plans for internal and external communication, including communication of the school district mission, student and district needs, and district priorities to the community and mass media.

9.2 Write and speak clearly and influentially in order to recruit community support for school programs.

9.3 Involve parents and other community members in serving school programs.

9.4 Provide service to the community and leadership for developing rapport between the schools and the community.

9.5 Obtain and respond to community feedback.

9.6 Implement consensus building and conflict mediation.

9.7 Align constituencies and build coalitions to support district needs and priorities and to gain financial and programmatic support.

9.8 Maintain constructive communication with employee organizations, including but not restricted to unions.

9.9 Understand and be able to communicate with all cultural groups in the community.

9.10 Institute, nurture, and improve the district's cooperative relationships with other districts, intermediate education units, the state education department, federal education agencies, etc., including sharing scarce resources, facilitating student transfers, conducting staff development, and obtaining grants.

9.11 Apply formal and informal techniques to gain external perception of the district by means of surveys, advisory groups, and personal contact.

9.12 Form alliances with other groups concerned with the welfare of children and youth, e.g., the police and fire departments and the juvenile courts.

9.13 Be knowledgeable about the community, including its history, culture, resources, and services.

9.14 Identify and analyze the political forces in the community.

9.15 Design effective strategies for passing referenda.

9.16 Successfully mediate conflicts related to the district.

9.17 Respond in an ethical and skillful way to the electronic and printed news media.

9.18 Involve stakeholders in educational decisions affecting them.

9.19 Exhibit environmental awareness and be proactive in such efforts as recycling and preserving natural resources.

10. Embody and promote **professionalism**.

10.1 Participate in professional education organizations, e.g., AASA, AERA, ASCD.

10.2 Conduct oneself in an ethical and professional manner.

10.3 Stay abreast of professional issues and developments in education.

10.4 Disseminate professional ideas and new developments to other professionals.

10.5 Know and employ appropriate evaluation and assessment techniques, e.g., performance assessment, standardized testing, and educational statistics.

10.6 Obtain and use evaluation information as a basis for improving performance; conduct a systematic annual self-evaluation, seeking and responding to criticism of performance.

10.7 Maintain an understanding of international issues affecting education.

10.8 Maintain personal, physical, and emotional health.

11. Relate effectively to the **school board**.

11.1 Meet the board's needs for information about district performance.

11.2 Interact with the board in an ethical, sensitive, and professional manner.

11.3 Communicate clearly and substantively to the board.

11.4 Educate the board about professional education issues and approaches.

11.5 Recommend policies to improve student learning and district performance.

11.6 Provide leadership to the board for defining superintendent and board roles, mutual expectations, procedures for working together, and strategies for formulating district policies.

11.7 Recognize and apply standards involving civil and criminal liabilities, and develop a checklist of procedures to avoid civil and criminal liabilities.

11.8 Recommend district policy in consideration of state and federal requirements.

11.9 Draft a district policy for external and internal programs.

General Framework to Guide Collection and Use of Information for Evaluating Superintendent Performance

The general categories of context, input, process, and product evaluation can assist the board to obtain both the general, year-to-year comparison information and the specific information needed in given years to assess fulfillment of duties.

Context Evaluation. In the beginning of the evaluation year, the board and superintendent need to examine whether or not the superintendent's previously assigned responsibilities and job targets are focused sufficiently on addressing the school district's current and projected leadership needs and problems. Data on needs, opportunities, and problems in the district should be employed early in the year to help the superintendent update duties and job targets appropriately. These same data will be useful later in the year for contrasting data on accomplishments (product evaluation) with the needs identified earlier in the year.

Input Evaluation. Each year the board and superintendent need to review plans, budgets, accounting reports from previous years, work plans, and calendars. They should do so in the interest of assuring that plans appropriately address unmet student needs. The board can be assisted by learning what plans, planning processes, and particular improvement strategies are working well in other districts. Consistent with the need to ground planning as well as evaluation in sound communication, the board should assure that the district's planning process includes appropriate involvement of stakeholders.

Process Evaluation. The superintendent has a major and ongoing responsibility to provide the board with process evaluation information. Essentially, this includes documentation and progress reports on the implementation of district and superintendent plans and use of district funds and other resources. The information should also include any noteworthy modification in plans, schedules, assignments, and budgets. Process information includes written and oral progress reports by the superintendent and other district staff. The superintendent should expect to receive the board's evaluations of the adequacy of the reported progress during these meetings. Such process evaluations can provide the superintendent and staff with direction and stimulation for appropriate problem-solving activities.

Superintendents are advised to maintain portfolios of up-to-date information on the implementation of plans. Such an up-to-date information source can assist the superintendent to address unexpected questions from the board. The information will be invaluable to the board when it conducts its summative evaluation of the superintendent's performance. If the superintendent defines a clear structure for the portfolio, staff can be engaged to regularly supply the needed documentation as it becomes available.

Product Evaluation. In addition to the process evaluation records on the extent to which targeted needs were addressed, the board will need evidence on outcomes. Primarily, the outcomes will be identified and assessed in terms of the district and student needs identified earlier. For example, were improvements seen in such targeted need areas as teacher attendance, involvement of stakeholders in the district's planning process, racial balance of staff across the schools, constructive coverage of the district's programs by the press, measures of school climate across the district, dropout rate, percentage of students having needed immunizations, achievement test scores of minority students, student attendance, physical fitness of students, foundation and government grants and contracts, and replacement of science text materials. It is likely that the board will be more interested in the direction of outcomes (improvement versus deterioration or maintenance of the status quo) than in whether or not some targeted values are met or exceeded.

In addition to the targeted variables, product evaluations must look for positive and negative side effects or unexpected outcomes. This can be achieved by maintaining a section on unexpected accomplishments in the superintendent's performance portfolio. Also, stakeholders can be invited to submit evidence and judgments, both positive and negative, about the accomplishments of the school district.

The foregoing discussion of context, input, process, and product evaluation is summarized in Figure 2. For each type of evaluation, the chart identifies pertinent information to be obtained, methods for obtaining the information, and uses of the obtained information. Board presidents and superintendents may find this chart useful for informing new board members about the kind of information they should be seeking and using to evaluate superintendent performance, as well as the performance of the overall district.

Putting the Pieces Together

Figure 3 provides an overview of the evaluation model. It uses a series of rectangles and boxes to denote important parts of the evaluation process. The entire model is driven by ongoing consideration of the 21 Personnel Evaluation Standards and sound communication between board and superintendent, as well as communication with other members of the school community.

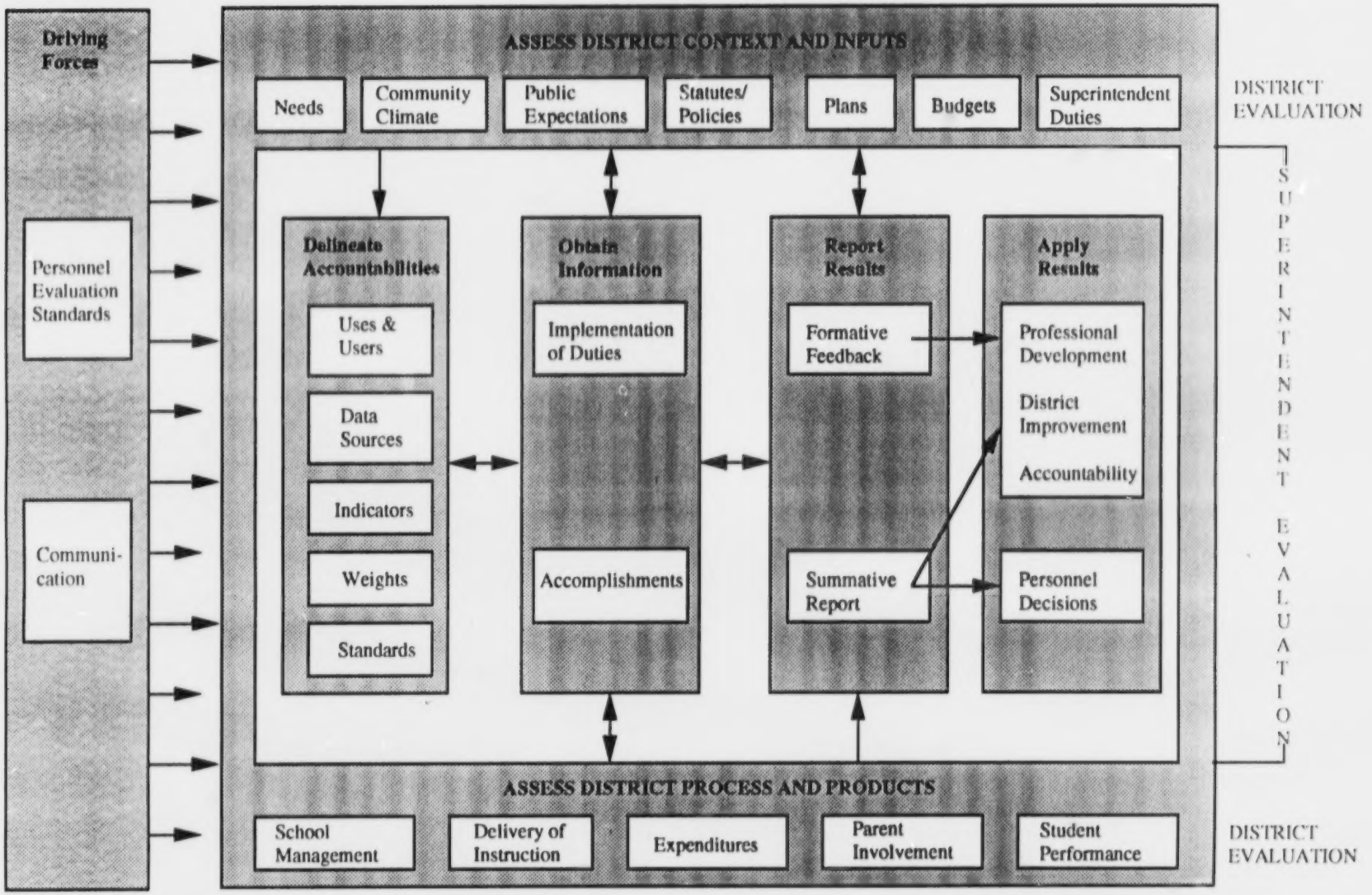
The interior shaded rectangles of the model denote the four main task areas involved in superintendent evaluation: delineating accountabilities, obtaining information, and reporting and

Figure 2. Four Types of Evaluation

	CONTEXT EVALUATION	INPUT EVALUATION	PROCESS EVALUATION	PRODUCT EVALUATION
INFORMATION	1. Multiyear district data: • test results • student attendance • graduation • dropouts • student characteristics • staff characteristics • staff evaluations • school environment • school programs • student services • district finances • district facilities • complaints 2. Data from comparable districts 3. Pertinent national & state norms 4. Conclusions re needs, problems, opportunities	1. District strategic plan 2. Staff assignments 3. District calendar 4. Budget 5. Accounting reports from prior plans 6. Superintendent duties 7. Superintendent salary 8. Superintendent work plan 9. Parent & community involvment 10. Promising new strategies & associated evaluations 11. Independent assessment of the district's plans, strategies, assignments, & budgets	1. Progress reports on: • special projects • staffing • product development • delivery of instruction • delivery of student services • stakeholder involvement 2. Accounting reports 3. Exception reports, e.g., modifications in • plans • assignments • schedules • budgets 4. Independent assessment of operations	1. Comprehensive identification of outcomes 2. Comparison of outcomes to • assessed needs • assigned duties • previous trends • achievements in similar districts • pertinent norms 3. Judgments of outcomes in consideration of • needs • opportunities • problems • constraints • costs
METHOD	1. District data banks 2. Stakeholder panel 3. School climate surveys 4. Annual principal reports 5. Clippings file 6. Hearings 7. Quantitative & qualitative analysis	1. Strategic planning process 2. Budget planning process 3. Records of stakeholder involvement in planning 4. Site visits to other districts 5. External evaluators	1. Staff/superintendent progress reports 2. Accounting reports 3. Superintendent portfolio of activities 4. Records of stakeholder involvement in programs	1. District data bank 2. School climate surveys 3. Superintendent portfolio of accomplishments 4. Survey of stakeholders 5. Independent ratings by board members 6. Synthesis report by board president/committee
USE	1. Set district priorities 2. Set superintendent job targets 3. Provide basis for judging significance of accomplishments 4. Consider district constraints in judging superintendent performance 5. Target pertinent opportunities for use in school improvement	1. Clarify board /superintendent understanding of plans, assignments, budgets 2. Improve plans, assignments, budgets 3. Involve stakeholders in planning 4. Provide clear guidance for superintendent performance	1. Keep board & community informed about implementation of plans 2. Maintain fiscal accountability 3. Provide early warning system for identifying & addressing implementation problems 4. Maintain record of implementation for use in interpreting outcomes	1. Help board assess merit and/or worth of superintendent's accomplishments 2. Help board develop outcome-based decisions on superintendent's • salary • continuation • professional development plan 3. Help board be accountable to community for oversight of superintendent's accomplishments

Figure 3

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION MODEL



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applying evaluation results. These rectangles are surrounded a larger shaded rectangle composed of district assessment elements, indicating that these elements influence, and/or are influenced by, the undertaking of the specified tasks. The area enclosing Contexts and Inputs, for instance, indicates an assessment of district needs, constraints, expectations, and plans, which then forms the basis for developing accountabilities.

In delineating the superintendent's accountabilities decisions are made on the following items, as noted: uses and users of the evaluation, data sources, indicators, weights, and standards. These decisions are influenced by the nuances of the particular district but will use, as a baseline, those generic duties that are common to all superintendents.

Obtained information concerning the superintendent's implementation of duties and the superintendent's accomplishments feeds into both formative feedback to the superintendent during the year and to a summative report at the end of the year. Arrows from the district-level assessment rectangle indicate that both formative and summative findings should be interpreted in light of the broader district context.

Four areas of application served by evaluation results are identified in the Apply Results rectangle. Personnel decisions require summative evaluations; the other three foci of application (professional development, district improvement, and accountability) can be addressed either for the purpose of improving the application area (a formative process) or for making a summative judgment or decision about it.

Implementing the Model Within Normal School Year Calendars

No one sequence and set of assignments will fit all situations. Some districts will need to start the evaluation cycle at the beginning of the fiscal year, while others will need to start it in April, at the beginning of the school year, or at some other point. Each school board must schedule the superintendent performance evaluation work to fit its district's particular situation and must integrate the evaluation tasks into the regular flow of board-superintendent interactions. Typically, the school board and superintendent are involved in formal, planned communications at least once a month at the regularly scheduled board of education meetings. Many school districts schedule two or more meetings a month, so the opportunity for superintendent-board dialogue is ample.

The following suggestions are provided as an annual calendar in which to conduct an adequate superintendent performance evaluation. There is no intention in these suggestions that the board should micromanage the work of the superintendent.

Superintendent/Board Interactions in the Context of an Annual Evaluation Calendar

Below we list the tasks required in each quarter so that the district can adjust the evaluation calendar according to its needs.

	TASKS
QUARTER #1	
	- Review prior year's activities and results (especially student performance data, performance evaluations of school staff, and system needs)
	- Set preliminary strategic plan
	- Set general priorities; review duties
	- Set preliminary superintendent objectives and work plan/duties
QUARTER #2	
	- Accept campus improvement plans
	- Set priorities for the year/update duties
	- Adjust strategic plan
	- Adjust superintendent objectives and work plan as needed
	- Establish superintendent evaluation design (including intended uses and users, performance indicators and weights, performance standards, data sources and procedures, and reporting schedule)
QUARTER #3	
	- Progress report on implementation of strategic plan and assigned superintendent duties
	- Formative evaluation exchanges between board and superintendent
	- Adjust superintendent priorities and tasks
	- Set improvement targets
QUARTER #4	
	- Accountability report from the superintendent
	- Gather data from community, students, schools
	- Summative evaluation of superintendent

- Development of professional improvement plan if needed
- Pertinent personnel decisions
- Summary report to community
- Recycle strategic plan

Dialogue about the listed tasks should occur sometime during the quarter under which they are listed. The district's strategic plan should be adopted as early in the first quarter as possible. This provides the structure needed to develop a comprehensive and pertinent list of superintendent priorities and tasks. Also, the summative evaluation should be completed as late as is feasible in the fourth quarter, so that it can reflect a comprehensive set of data about superintendent and district performance in the context of district needs and pertinent constraints.

Main Superintendent/Board Performance Evaluation Activities in Each Quarter

In order to study superintendent performance evaluation per se, it is useful to filter out nonevaluative activities and to focus on the main superintendent performance evaluation activities that are emphasized in each quarter. Figure 4 is provided for this purpose.

As seen in the figure, the relative emphasis, by quarters, on Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation corresponds quite closely and differentially to what steps the board of education needs to take in each quarter in evaluating superintendent performance. Therefore, boards of education might usefully adopt the CIPP concepts to guide evaluations of superintendent performance. The simplicity of these four concepts, at the general level, facilitates training new board members in the district's general approach to superintendent evaluation. The fact that each CIPP concept fits into a particular quarter of the school year provides a parsimonious scheme to guide data collection. Finally, context, input, process, and product evaluations are keyed to helping boards and educators assess performance and take actions focused on meeting student and district needs.

Differentiating Board and Superintendent Responsibilities for Superintendent Performance Evaluation

In addition to sequencing evaluation tasks, it is useful to define the individual and collective evaluation responsibilities of the superintendent and board. Figure 5 is a general guide for assigning such responsibilities, which include applying evaluative information as well as delineating, obtaining, and reporting it. The responsibilities are differentiated by the collective efforts of superintendent and board, plus the independent responsibilities of each. Also, the responsibilities are organized according to the applicable quarter of the year. Within each quarter, the listed responsibilities are numbered to indicate their approximate sequence. An underlying principle in the chart is differentiation of evaluation tasks, in accordance with the board's governance and policymaking authority and the superintendent's responsibilities for carrying out the board's directives. Essentially, the superintendent provides advice and data to the board, and the board uses the input to evaluate superintendent

Figure 4

MAIN EVALUATION EMPHASIS

in Each Quarter

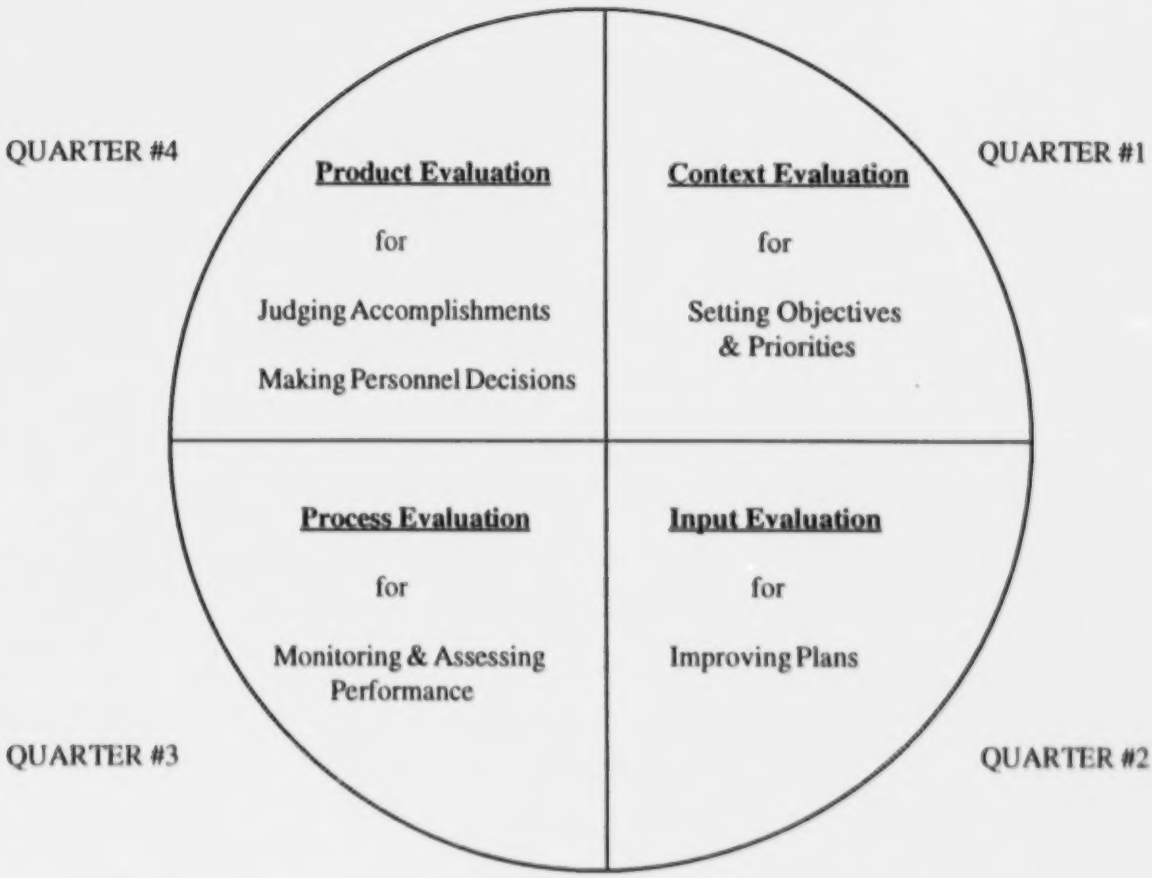

Figure 5

EVALUATION-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD IN EACH QUARTER

	QUARTER #1	QUARTER #2	QUARTER #3	QUARTER #4
Superintendent and Board	1. Review Context Evaluation data 5. Discuss superintendent evaluation plan for the year	2. Discuss campus plans	3. Review progress in implementing plans (Process Evaluation)	3. Gather data from community, students, schools 6. Develop P.I.P. 8. Recycle strategic plan
Superintendent	3. Update strategic plan	1. Evaluate campus plans (Input Evaluation) 3. Adjust strategic plan	1. Maintain portfolio of key activities 2. Provide progress reports	1. Maintain portfolio of accomplishments (Product Evaluation) 2. Provide accountability report to Board
Board	2. Set general priorities 4. Approve strategic plan 6. Update superintendent duties	4. Approve revised strategic plan 5. Establish superintendent evaluation design	4. Formative evaluation of superintendent performance	4. Summative evaluation of superintendent performance 5. Personnel decisions 7. Report to community

performance and to take appropriate follow-up actions. In addition, the board and superintendent jointly use the evaluative information to engage in collaborative planning.

Concluding Comments

Superintendent performance evaluations do not distinguish precisely between superintendent performance and district performance. This is appropriate and desirable. For the board and superintendent to get the most benefit from superintendent performance evaluation, they need to evaluate needs, plans, processes, and outcomes, keyed not just to improving the superintendent's performance of duties, but more fundamentally to improving school district services and student achievement. Since the superintendent is the district's chief executive officer, it is reasonable to key judgments of her/his performance to judgments of the functioning and achievements of the district as a whole. Of course, the constraints in the setting must be taken into account, and the superintendent should not be held accountable for shortfalls not under her/his control.

Clearly, the superintendent cannot control poverty in the district, nor can the superintendent control limited school finances. Such factors severely restrict the resources available to the superintendent in attempting to meet student needs and improve school district services. By thoroughly considering contextual constraints when making evaluative judgments, boards can be assured of providing a fair and defensible evaluation of superintendent performance.

Despite the brief section on implementation of superintendent performance evaluation, this publication is largely theoretical. The model introduced in this section provides conceptual tools to guide both discussion and field work toward improving superintendent evaluation. We hope the manuscript will be useful to interested parties for further examining and improving the concept and procedures of superintendent performance evaluation. The next step, and a future CREATE project, will be to operationalize and field test the model as developed.

In its present form, school boards and other groups might find CREATE's draft superintendent performance evaluation model useful for several purposes:

- As a conceptual organizer for discussing the characteristics of sound superintendent evaluation systems
- As an experimental model to be adapted, operationalized, and tested
- As an overlay for developing a superintendent performance portfolio
- As a set of checklists for examining the completeness of an existing superintendent evaluation system

- As a guide to defining school district policy on superintendent evaluation
- As a template for school district committees to use in designing a new superintendent evaluation system

CREATE's research team needs feedback on the draft superintendent performance evaluation model in order to improve and prepare it for field testing. Pertinent reactions and recommendations are welcomed; we would also like to hear from any groups interested in helping to field test the model.